

*The Belsize Society is a Registered Charity (number 1180842), continuing the work of the Belsize Residents Association.*

[www.belsize.org.uk](http://www.belsize.org.uk)

## Notes from your Chair

Welcome to the November BelSoc Newsletter.

You'll find an article about the Hampstead Theatre as it reaches its 60th year, with a new artistic director and an exciting season of plays. The newsletter also highlights another anniversary, as St Peter's church reaches 160 years.

This issue comes to you with a letter about renewing your membership. This year, you'll be joining the Belsize Society. We hope you continue to support us as we become a charitable incorporated organisation, and - as we have taken a charitable status - consider using gift aid when making payments to us.

The issue also covers some recent Society contributions to local matters. It looks like the proposed boundaries in the Borough have taken on comments made by us to the Local Government Boundary Commission; we also report on our work relating to planning enforcement.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the Society's carol singing this year.

Hope you enjoy this Newsletter.

### CONTENTS

Hampstead Theatre at 60 -	2
Belsize in Film/TV Adverts -	3
Volunteering for Events -	3
Ward boundaries in Camden -	4
Belsize Community Library -	5
St Peter's Church Clock -	6
Renew your membership -	6
Camden Planning Enforcement -	7
100 Avenue Road CMP -	7
Dates for Your Diary -	8



## **BELSOC CAROL SINGING 2019**

***Belsize Terrace,  
Saturday, 21 December  
from 4.30pm  
Mince pies, singing and great  
company!***

*Donations to Marie Curie Hospice*



## Hampstead Theatre at Sixty

This is a milestone year for Hampstead Theatre, which celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday in September. As many readers will know, the theatre has recently welcomed a new Artistic Director, replacing Edward Hall who was at the helm from 2010. Roxana Silbert has joined from the Birmingham Rep and continues the theatre's tradition of staging significant new plays and new writers.

The current season got off to a memorable start with *The King of Hell's Palace* which ran in September and October. The play, written by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig and directed by Michael Boyd (former Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company), was inspired by the real life of Dr Shuping Wang, who exposed the spread of hepatitis and HIV infection through contaminated blood and plasma in China two decades ago. The imaginative set, which jutted out into the audience, made the dialogue, singing, dancing and soundscape very engrossing.

### Ravens opens on 29 November

Set in Reykjavik in 1972, the play goes back to a time when all eyes were on Iceland ahead of 'the Match of the Century': Boris Spassky vs. Bobby Fischer in the World Chess Championship. The stakes could not be higher – not only personally but also in the context of the Cold War.



On the opening night of *Hell's Palaxe*, at the curtain call, the actress playing the role inspired by Shuping's whistleblowing invited Shuping onto the stage to take a bow. She received a standing ovation, which was, in retrospect, particularly poignant as she was to pass away 10 days later.

The Christmas production, *Ravens: Spassky vs. Fischer*, opening on 29 November, promises to be a gripping, psychological thriller. Taking as its subject the famous chess match that became a signature event of the Cold War, this is a world premiere from Tom Morton-Smith, the writer of *Oppenheimer*. It is directed by Annabelle Comyn, who has worked in leading theatres in Ireland where she is based.

Roxana Silbert makes her own directing debut as Artistic Director in early 2020. The play is *The Haystack*, another world premiere, and is an intriguing story about GCHQ, data, electronic intrusion and the world of intelligence operations.

Many residents will remember the Hampstead Theatre Club, as it then was, in its much-loved repurposed scout hut. Today the theatre's welcoming space houses two auditoria: the recently refurbished Main House, with 370 seats and the exciting studio space, Hampstead Downstairs. The downstairs studio (of which your Editor is a particular devotee) has hosted many innovative and interesting productions, in an informal atmosphere.

Hampstead Theatre has many plans to mark this birthday year, including a fundraising gala event in January.

Roxana comments: "We need new theatre now more than ever to inspire audiences wrestling and navigating a world that seems to be in freefall". She says that the plays this season "ask vital questions about community and individualism, greed and account, the responsibility and rights of the individual, technology and privacy, uncertainty and identity, the toll on mental health, and, always, the need to find love and connection. They are theatrical, human, and brilliantly written."

Cathy Baker, the theatre's Development Director who is part of a friendly team, has told us: "We hope Belsize residents will continue to visit and enjoy this very special theatre of international renown, on our doorstep."

Bookings can be made online at [www.hampsteadtheatre.com](http://www.hampsteadtheatre.com) or by calling the Box Office on 020 7722 9301.

*The Hampstead Theatre is by the tube: Eton Avenue, Swiss Cottage, London, NW3 3EU*



### **Belsize in Film and TV Advertisements**

TV viewers with eagle eyes will have noticed that the current commercial for Direct Line Insurance is set in Belsize Village. BelSoc is often informed about film projects and can liaise with production companies on behalf of affected residents.

We have been in touch with Olympia Productions UK Limited who are proposing to film scenes for a new feature film entitled "Sack Lunch" in January 2020 in Belsize Lane. Sack Lunch will be a family-friendly feature film scheduled for cinematic release in late 2020. The story follows a group of immortal beings as they strive to protect humanity.

Filming in Belsize Village is currently scheduled to take place on Saturday 18 January 2020.

The production company is applying to close a portion of the road in Belsize Village on the day of filming. Pedestrian access will be maintained. The filming proposal is currently being considered by Camden Film Office ([www.camdenfilloffice.co.uk](http://www.camdenfilloffice.co.uk)).

### **BelSoc Events and Catering**

The Committee is looking for one or more members to lead the management of events and catering for BelSoc. Now that we are getting on top of the administrative steps needed to solidify our charitable status, we wish to revive and renew our programme of events. Do you have experience of organising community events or think that you have the right skill set? If so, please do get in touch ([info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)). Full handover and support will be provided.

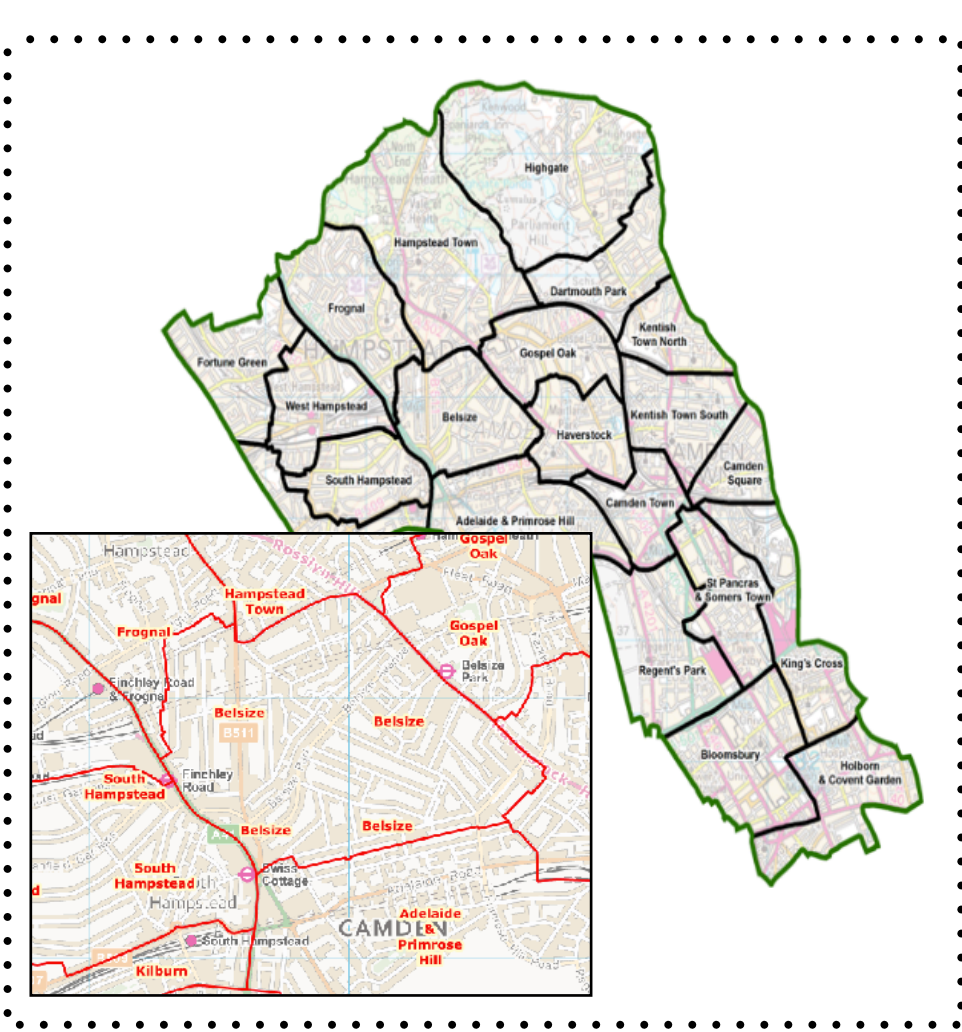
Plus....we always welcome volunteers willing to make cakes or savoury dishes for BelSoc events. Experienced or budding bakers: please get in touch.

# Ward Boundary Changes: Latest News

Following extensive consultation, to which BelSoc has contributed, the Local Boundary Commission for England has published revised draft recommendations for ward boundaries in Camden. The new recommendations contain some significant changes to previous drafts, and so the Commission decided to run an additional consultation exercise on the changes. That exercise closed on 11 November.

In light of a great deal of community evidence, the latest draft recommends that the whole of the area covered by the Netherhall Neighbourhood Association (Netherhall Gardens, Maresfield Gardens and Nutley Terrace) should be in Belsize ward and not split between Belsize and Frognal wards.

The Commission now proposes that the boundary between Belsize and Haverstock wards should run to the rear of the properties in Chalcot Gardens rather than down the centre of Englands Lane. The evidence which the Commission received suggested that Englands Lane was the



main shopping street and community hub for that part of Belsize ward and the initial proposed ward of Belsize would have divided this community.

The Commission recommends that the boundary between Gospel Oak and Belsize wards will run directly along Rosslyn Hill and Haverstock Hill so that the Aspern Grove/Russell Nurseries estate will be in Gospel Oak ward. The Commission has observed that "this estate is managed alongside other Gospel Oak estates via the Gospel Oak District Management Committee. Its inclusion in Gospel Oak ward will provide those electors with more

effective and convenient local government representation."

As for numbers of councillors, the proposal is that Belsize, Gospel Oak and Haverstock wards will each have three; Hampstead Town will have two. Swiss Cottage ward will no longer exist and a new South Hampstead ward will be created in that area, with three councillors.



### *Ward Boundary changes continued...*

In reaching its final recommendations, the Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Camden which will provide electoral equality in the sense that each local councillor ought to represent a similar number of voters, to the extent that this is possible. It will also consider community identity, aiming to reflect the interests of local communities and community links. The boundaries need to be easily identifiable and should be designed to help Camden to deliver effective and convenient local government. BelSoc's ideas have in the main been taken on board and so we are in broad agreement with these latest recommendations (there is no perfect solution).

The final recommendations will be published on 2 February 2020. After that, new boundaries must be approved by Parliament and will come into effect in time for the local elections in 2022.

Details can be found at: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/greater-london/greater-london/camden](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/greater-london/greater-london/camden). The map shows the names of the current proposed wards and their boundaries but these may change again in the final recommendations.

---

## **Belsize Community Library: Important Information**

**This will be a very challenging year for the survival of our lovely library in Belsize Park.**

This year, in fact, the funding that has to date been received from Camden Council is coming to an end. The Winch, who have supported the library since it was shut down by the Council in 2012, are only a small charity and do not have the means to keep the library going without Belsize residents' help. You can support the library in many ways. The most immediate one is to go onto its website (<http://belsizecommunitylibrary.org.uk/>) and become a regular donor.



You can also spread the word out about room hire. The library can indeed be hired for events and meetings on weekends. For more information and more ways to give your support, call 0207 586 06746 or drop the library a line at [belsizelibrary@thewinch.org](mailto:belsizelibrary@thewinch.org).

You can support the Library's interesting events, listed on the back of this newsletter: all BelSoc members are welcome. In the next months, you'll be able to hear how the Heath was saved (Helen Lawrence will talk about her book, covered in our last newsletter). Also, there will be a historical talk about Swiss Cottage.

Belsize Community Library, 14 Antrim Road, London NW3 4XR

## St Peter's Clock Descends to Earth

One of the exciting developments at St Peter's this year is represented by this photograph. The clock on the church tower has been lowered to the ground for the first time since 1859 to allow the mechanism and the four dials to be restored by clockmakers Smith of Derby. The main funding comes from St Peter's clock appeal, which the Belsize Society and members of the

congregation and the local community have supported and which remains open for donations.

The restored clock, with dials shining in a new coat of paint and gold leaf, will be reinstated in time for the Festal Evensong at 6.30pm on 13 November when all are invited to celebrate the 160th anniversary of the opening of the church. We hope that many members of the congregation and friends will be present that evening to wish St Peter's a happy anniversary.



---

### RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

BelSoc membership subscriptions for 2020 are due on 1 January 2020. We hope you will all wish to renew your membership as we are dependant on subscriptions for our work. We do not send out invoices but enclosed with this newsletter you will find a letter addressed to you personally with details of what to do. Please read it and take action before 1 January.

Remember all the benefits of the membership, such as the 'Tradesmen You Can Trust' booklet and the chance to be involved with local issues. Also, if you are able, please use gift aid when making membership payments.



St Peter's Church hosts high-quality musical events for everyone. The autumn season includes, on Sunday 1 December, Belsize Baroque directed by Catherine Martin performing works by Lully, Charpentier and Purcell. Other events to be held are listed on the back page of this newsletter.

## Planning matters

### Resident bodies meet with Camden Planning Enforcement

Committee members have attended consultations organised by Camden Planning Enforcement. They provide a valuable opportunity to find out the objectives of the Enforcement Officers and to raise concerns of Belsize residents.

Recent meetings have discussed how other London boroughs are strengthening their approach to enforcing planning obligations for significant construction projects, such as ones that involve a Construction Management Plan (see 100 Avenue Road below).

The commitments made by developers should try to minimise noise, pollution, traffic, etc. and then local authority enforcement officers should check that the construction follows the plan. For small projects, the enforcement can be light touch, but as projects become larger, active enforcement becomes more crucial. For Belsize, it is an issue even for single site residential projects as they can include large amounts of demolition/rebuild or basements.

BelSoc is a member of the Camden Resident Association Action Committee - an umbrella group for Camden resident bodies that has recently been reviewing the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's approach. Their approach seeks to be systematic about enforcement for significant construction works. It puts in place specific activities (site visits etc) to enforce obligations. Recognising that enforcement action in relation to complex construction projects needs to be resourced adequately (funding, people, skills etc), Kensington and Chelsea has put in place charges which are levied from developers undertaking projects that involve significant construction works.

This dialogue is valuable and timely. Community groups rely on the Council's enforcement teams. Citizen groups cannot provide systematic monitoring, professionalised and expert based, which is needed in order to ensure that significant projects meet Council standards and the agreed CMPs. And recent experience with large projects is worth discussing with the Council's enforcement teams, highlighting where improvements may be possible and desirable.

---

### 100 Avenue Road Construction Management Plan

Comments on the new 100 Avenue Road Construction Management Plan are due on 15 November 2019, probably after you read this Newsletter. The CMP is the agreement between Camden Council and the developers about the approach to be taken for managing construction works. A version was agreed earlier in the year, and the revisions in this round of consultation focus on and follow from detailed work undertaken since then.

Revisions respond to concerns raised by Transport for London, especially the developer's intention to lift large elements of the building into the site from the A41. The plan - and TfL will not allow this - would have meant the material passing over the entrance to the Swiss Cottage tube.

The revised plan has rerouted 18 deliveries each day so that they enter the site, rather than being lifted in from a pit lane off the main road. The new movements will mean articulated lorries being far closer to the open space. The CMP envisages fewer lorry trips in total, but the concern is that reduced use of the pit lane and increased use of the site near the open space will reduce air quality.

The Belsize Society is responding to the consultation.



# Dates for your diary

Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road, NW3  
[www.camdenartscentre.org](http://www.camdenartscentre.org)

7/8 December. Festive Weekend of free activities throughout Camden Arts Centre's galleries & studios.

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Wednesday 20 November 7.30pm. Stewart Purvis: Hampstead Spies. Stewart talks about Edith Tudor-Hart, the Belsize-based photographer (and KGB recruiter). £8 on the door and at <https://burghhouse.museumssites.com/>

Sunday 1 December, 7pm. From Vienna with Love. Marmara Trio play Schubert and Brahms. £15 and email [md787@cam.ac.uk](mailto:md787@cam.ac.uk).

St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, NW3

Wednesday 20 November, 6.30pm: James Roose-Evans, founder of the Hampstead Theatre, discusses his book *Older* (Zuleika, 2019). Tickets £5, including wine, in advance at Daunt's on Haverstock Hill, or by telephone 020 7794 4006.

Friday 22 November, 7.30pm: St Cecilia Day concert by Patrick Johnson, cello and Louis Mander, composer-pianist. Programme to include Poulenc's *Cello Sonata* and Mander's *Cello Sonata No 3*. Tickets £10 on the door.

Sunday 1 December, 6.30pm: Belsize Baroque directed by Catherine Martin perform works by Lully, Charpentier and Purcell. Tickets on the door £12.  
[www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk)

Saturday 7 December, 1.15pm: Buck Brass Trio give a recital with music by Mozart, Gabrieli, Brahms and some festive treats! Free admission - retiring collection.

Belsize Community Library, Antrim Road, NW3

Thursday 21 November, 7.30pm. Noelle Rimmington and Colin Pinney present 'Faster than fairies, faster than witches: Robert Louis Stevenson.' Donation of £3 including refreshment.

Thursday 16 January, 7.30pm. How Hampstead Heath was Saved: A talk by Helen Lawrence. Donation of £3 including refreshment.

Thursday 19 March 2020, 7.30pm. Swiss Cottage : An Illustrated Historical Talk by the Archivist, Tudor Allen. Donation of £3 including refreshment.

## Contact Us

For membership and general enquiries:  
Anne Stevens  
020 7794 0874  
[info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)

Prabhat Vaze (*Chair*)  
07930 406230  
[chair@belsize.org.uk](mailto:chair@belsize.org.uk)

Sarah Courtin (*Secretary*)  
[secretary@belsize.org.uk](mailto:secretary@belsize.org.uk)

For Newsletter submissions and letters:  
[info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk). Deadline for next issue is: **26 January 2020**

To send posters for noticeboards:  
[haverstockboard@belsize.org.uk](mailto:haverstockboard@belsize.org.uk)  
[villageboard@belsize.org.uk](mailto:villageboard@belsize.org.uk)

To send details for Tradesmen You Can Trust:  
[TYCT@belsize.org.uk](mailto:TYCT@belsize.org.uk)

For planning matters: [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)

Interested in keeping up with Belsize news and events? If we have your email address, we will send you occasional emails with news about Belsize and BelSoc. If you wish to receive emails and are not already on our list, please send your email address to [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk).

To find out the latest about Camden Planning: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/>

[www.belsize.org.uk](http://www.belsize.org.uk)